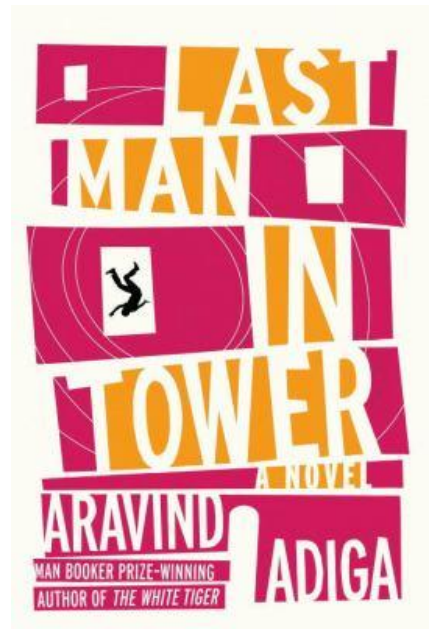
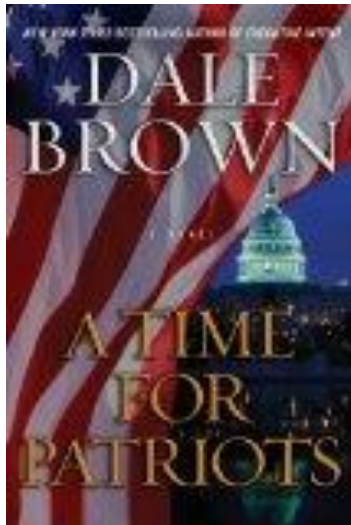


**“Last Man in Tower,” by Aravind Adiga. Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.\$26.95, 382 pages.**

This interesting new novel by Booker Prize winning author Aravind Adiga is set in Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay. Two vivid main characters, Dharmen Shah and Masterji, are well developed and invoke compassion. The former seeks to construct an elite residential building called the Shanghai. One has to admire how Shah built his real estate empire from nothing. Masterji is a retired school teacher with high moral standards and ethics. However, friction quickly arises when it is announced the location of the proposed building would require the demolition of Masterji’s dilapidated apartment building. As you might have guessed, Masterji refuses to vacate the premises. As a reader, I empathized with Masterji for wanting to make a stand for his home. All of the other tenants are more than willing to accept the substantial buyout terms offered by Shah, which was roughly twice the current value. The tenants would receive the money in three installments. The first portion would be given upon signing the agreement. The second installment would be given upon vacating the premises and the remaining amount three months later. In addition, they would receive a stipend equivalent to eight weeks rent while they looked for permanent accommodations. What could possess Masterji to resist this generous payout? The writer excels at vivid imagery and believable pathos. You will long remember this story. Aravind Adiga lives in India and writes for *Time* and *The New Yorker* magazines. He also wrote the novel “White Tiger.”



**“A Time For Patriots” by Dale Brown. HarperCollins, 2011. \$26.99, 376 pages.**



Brown has written a fictional account about a terrorist problem within the geographical boundaries of the United States with his latest novel. Air Force Lieutenant-General, Patrick McLanahan is called to action to lead the Nevada Wing of the Civil Air Patrol when armed insurgents are roaming in the western United States. The events that have brought the country to this state include a divisive presidential election, massive cuts to government spending, losses to education, and public safety. Armed citizens have formed alliances for their own protection. The situation becomes dicey when nuclear grade radioactive materials are stolen. McLanahan must stop the terrorists before they launch a dirty bomb. He also has to determine who the traitors within his command are before he ends up dead. Dale Brown is a masterful writer of suspense. The suspense builds with each turn of the page. Will McLanahan be able to use all of his military expertise and airborne training to bring this threat under control? Dale Brown was a former Air Force pilot and writes about all things military with expertise,

fast paced action, and suspense. Each chapter begins with a quotation that deserves a momentary pause to consider.

Susan Benning can be reached at 336-229-3588. Call us to find out about upcoming programs at May Memorial Library.